

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A washing method in a steam injection type washing machine, comprising:

5 a washing step for performing a washing process while rotating a wash tub when wash water is supplied into the wash tub; and

10 a steam supplying step for injecting steam into the wash tub during execution of the washing step, thereby increasing a temperature of the wash water supplied into the wash tub.

2. The washing method according to claim 1, wherein:

the washing step comprises a clothes wetting step for supplying wash water into the wash tub to a water level lower than a predetermined water level for washing of clothes, thereby causing clothes contained in the wash tub to be wetted by the supplied wash water, and a main washing step for supplying wash water into the wash tub to the predetermined water level for washing of clothes after execution of the clothes wetting step, and performing a main washing process; and

the wash water supplied into the wash tub is pumped to a top portion of the wash tub, at the clothes wetting step, to circulate through the wash tub.

3. The washing method according to claim 1, wherein the steam supplying step comprises:

a water supplying step for supplying wash water into a tank provided with a heater;

5 a steam generating step for heating the wash water supplied into the tank by operation of the heater, thereby generating steam; and

a steam injecting step for injecting the steam generated at the steam generating step into the wash tub.

10 4. The washing method according to claim 3, wherein the water supplied into the tank at the water supplying step is limited to a predetermined water level by a water level sensor provided at the tank.

15 5. The washing machine according to claim 3, wherein the water supplying step is executed while wash water is supplied into the wash tub.

20 6. The washing method according to claim 5, wherein the water supplying step comprises the steps of:

simultaneously opening a water supply line adapted to guide wash water into the tank and a steam supply line adapted to guide steam from the tank into the wash tub when wash water
25 is supplied into the wash tub; and

closing the water supply line and the steam supply line when wash water is supplied into the wash tub to a minimum reset water level sensible by a water level sensor provided at the wash tub.

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7. The washing method according to claim 5, wherein the water supplying step further comprises the step of:

if an internal temperature of the tank reaches a predetermined temperature, re-supplying wash water into the
10 tank until the water level sensor senses a variation in water level.

8. The washing method according to claim 3, wherein the operation of the heater is stopped when an internal pressure of
15 the tank reaches a predetermined pressure at the steam generating step.

9. The washing method according to claim 8, wherein the steam injecting step is executed when the operation of the
20 heater is stopped at the steam generating step.

10. The washing method according to claim 3, wherein the operation of the heater is stopped when a temperature of heat generated from the heater reaches a predetermined temperature
25 at the steam generating step.

11. The washing method according to claim 3, wherein the heater is operated for a predetermined operating time at the steam generating step.

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12. The washing method according to claim 3, wherein the steam injecting step is executed when an internal temperature of the tank reaches to a predetermined temperature.

10 13. The washing method according to claim 3, wherein the steam injecting step is completed when a wash water temperature of the wash tub reaches a predetermined wash water temperature.

15 14. A washing method in a steam injection type washing machine, comprising:

a washing step for wetting clothes contained in a wash tub by wash water supplied into the wash tub while circulating the wash water through the wash tub, and performing a washing process while rotating the wash tub;

20 a water supplying step for supplying wash water into a tank provided with a heater during execution of the washing step;

25 a steam generating step for heating the wash water supplied into the tank by operation of the heater, thereby generating steam; and

a steam injecting step for injecting the steam generated at the steam generating step into the wash tub.

5 15. The washing method according to claim 14, wherein the water supplying step is executed while wash water is re-supplied into the wash tub at the washing step.

10 16. The washing method according to claim 14, wherein the water supplying step comprises the steps of:

15 simultaneously opening a water supply line adapted to guide wash water into the tank and a steam supply line adapted to guide steam from the tank into the wash tub when wash water is supplied into the wash tub; and

15 closing the water supply line and the steam supply line when wash water is supplied into the wash tub to a minimum reset water level sensible by a water level sensor provided at the wash tub.

20 17. The washing method according to claim 16, wherein the water supplying step further comprises the step of:

 if an internal temperature of the tank reaches a predetermined temperature, re-supplying wash water into the tank until the water level sensor senses a variation in water level.

18. The washing method according to claim 14, wherein the
operation of the heater is stopped when an internal pressure of
the tank reaches a predetermined pressure at the steam
generating step, and simultaneously, the steam injecting step
5 is executed.

19. The washing method according to claim 14, wherein the
operation of the heater is stopped when a temperature of heat
generated from the heater reaches a predetermined temperature
10 at the steam generating step.

20. The washing method according to claim 14, wherein the
heater is operated for a predetermined operating time at the
steam generating step.

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21. The washing method according to claim 14, wherein the
steam injecting step is executed when an internal temperature
of the tank reaches to a predetermined temperature.

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22. A washing method in a steam injection type washing
machine, comprising:

a washing step for performing a washing process while
rotating a wash tub when wash water is supplied into the wash
tub;

25 a water supplying step for filling wash water in a tank

provided with a heater while the wash water is supplied into the wash tub to a minimum reset water level sensible by a water level sensor provided at the wash tub;

5 a steam generating step for operating the heater until an internal pressure or temperature of the tank reaches to a predetermined internal pressure or temperature, or until an operating time of the heater reaches a predetermined operating time, after execution of the water supplying step, to heat the wash water in the tank, thereby generating steam in the tank;

10 and

15 a steam injecting step for, if the internal temperature of the tank reaches the predetermined internal temperature, injecting the generated steam into the wash tub until a wash water temperature of the wash tub reaches a predetermined wash water temperature.

23. The washing method according to claim 22, wherein:

the washing step comprises a clothes wetting step for supplying wash water into the wash tub to a water level lower than a predetermined water level for washing of clothes, thereby causing clothes contained in the wash tub to be wetted by the supplied wash water, and a main washing step for supplying wash water into the wash tub to the predetermined water level for washing of clothes after execution of the clothes wetting step, and performing a main washing process;

and

the wash water supplied into the wash tub is pumped to a top portion of the wash tub, at the clothes wetting step, to circulate through the wash tub.